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## **The Dominguez Watershed Advisory Council (DWAC)**

Chair: County of Los Angeles DPW - *Dave Rydman*

Co-Chair: City of Torrance - *Wendell Johnson*

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### Outline of Monthly Meeting

Date: November 5, 2003

Time: 1:30-3:30 p.m.

Location: Port of Long Beach Headquarters

### **Attendees:** (on sign-in list)

Jess Morton, PV Audubon  
Jamie Aderhold, J2A Env.  
Dave Rydman, LACDPW  
John Morano, Nat Ener. Lab  
Kristen Ruffell, LACSD  
Blane Frandsen, Lawndale  
Mary Loquvam, SCWRP  
Jess Morton, Audubon  
Vanessa Tubaces, PVE

Chris Chase, Interocean Sys  
Jennifer Bender, WBMWD  
Rick Harter, LASGRWC  
LB Nye, LARWQCB  
Jeff Stewart, LLNL  
Kim Guignard, POLB  
Cathy Beauregard, CSPNC  
Wendell Johnson, Torrance

Jim Marchese, City of LA - RAD  
Phyllis Papen, Alliance for Water Quality  
Mahdad Derakhshani, LACDPW  
Kathleen McGowan, RHE and RH  
John Isom, LLNL  
Heloise Froelich, City of LA – RAD  
Bert Vogler, Kleinfelder  
Karen Green, MEC

- I. Minutes from October meeting approved as drafted.
- II. Presentation of TMDL modeling efforts by Lawrence Livermore National Labs
  - A. Jeff Stewart, John Isom and John Morano briefly described the TMDL implementation strategy model that is being developed under contract from the US Department of Energy using the Dominguez Watershed as a test case.
  - B. The model takes into consideration costs, schedule, strategy, and stakeholder priorities and will be a decision aiding tool. Stakeholders will be able to access different strategies for TMDL compliance using the model, so the model is very dependent on input from stakeholders' regarding their values and concerns.
  - C. John would like input from city reps, industry reps and environmental groups. He can be reached via email at [isom3@llnl.gov](mailto:isom3@llnl.gov) or [jeisom@earthlink.net](mailto:jeisom@earthlink.net).
- III. MEC Update on Master Plan development
  - A. Karen shared that she and her team are in the process of completing the Actions section of the Dominguez Watershed Management Master Plan which should be drafted by the end of December. Karen distributed 3 sample concepts that will be included in the Action section for stakeholders to review and provide final comments on before the draft is released.
  - B. Karen asked for clarification and then led discussion on a few outstanding items for the Actions section.
    1. Brownfields – are jurisdictions more inclined to reclaim and rehabilitated under utilized land for commercial development with property tax value or utilize as open or recreational space?
      - a. It depends on where they are located.

- Waterway adjacent
- Industrial areas
- Proximity to those who will utilize the parks
- b. Additional space could fulfill recreational needs for cities as most are well below target ratios of acreage per 1000 residents.
- c. If properties are developed for commercial uses, a portion of the land could be set aside as a conservation easement with associated tax benefits.
- d. Additional consideration could be given to creating shallow groundwater wells and treatment plants on the brownfield sites to pump, treat and re-use the water.
- 2. Model ordinances
  - a. Karen shared potential water conservation ordinances and asked for feedback
  - b. There is some confusion as to whether dry weather flows should be eliminated in some subwatersheds.
  - c. The model ordinance action in the plan should reference ordinances of cities who are implementing watershed management .
    - City of Santa Monica
    - City of Seattle
    - City of Portland
    - Mohave Desert
    - City of Long Beach
  - d. Also reference LEED guidelines
- 3. The plan will use wording such as discourage or promote rather than ban or install.
- 4. Median swales or vegetated medians with recycled water irrigation - where have they been installed?
  - a. Artesia Blvd
  - b. PV Drive North near the City of Lomita
  - c. Madrona Blvd from Sepulveda to Del Amo
  - d. Manhattan Beach Blvd from Prairie to Hawthorne

#### IV. Dominguez Watershed draft monitoring program

- A. Dave Rydman distributed a draft proposal for a monitoring program in the Dominguez Watershed (see attachment). The draft was based on the workshop and meeting discussions conducted over the previous three months.
- B. The program proposes various methods to monitor water quality, habitat and land throughout the Dominguez Watershed.
- C. Dave requested those in attendance to review the document and provide comments. The following suggestions were made.
  - 1. Focus the water quality sampling on 303(d) listed pollutants rather than the priority pollutants in the current MS4 permit.
  - 2. Highlight County's public outreach efforts that are part of the current MS4 permit requirements.
- D. Dave requested additional comments be provided via email.

- V. Announcements
  - A. Chris Chase introduced Interocean Systems, Inc and their product that detects oil spills in receiving waters.
  - B. Mary Loquvam announced that California Coastal Conservancy is hosting a workshop on December 4 in Long Beach to present the findings of a SCCWRP study on the habitat value of wetlands used to treat urban runoff.
  - C. Karen asked for additional input from those in attendance on where project concepts could be located throughout the watershed.
- VI. Next Meeting
  - A. January 7, 2004 1:30-3:30pm at Port of Long Beach

## **DRAFT Dominguez Watershed Monitoring Program**

The Dominguez Watershed presents a unique opportunity for coordinated and thorough watershed assessment. Because the watershed is fully developed, many industries have historically monitored the receiving water bodies and the few undisturbed or natural areas are closely guarded and monitored by local activists. Rather than a new a coordinated sampling program, what is needed for the Dominguez Watershed is

- Assessment of behavior,
- Strategic observation, and
- Coordination of current efforts

The Dominguez Watershed Management Master Plan has been developed around 5 specific goals.

- Protect and enhance water quality.
- Conserve, reuse and recharge water supply
- Protect, enhance and restore native habitats and biological resources
- Promote public awareness and involvement in watershed management
- Implement stewardship of the watershed and its resources in balance with economic and environmental impacts.

### **Water Quality**

The threefold goal identified by the DWAC for this receiving water quality monitoring program is to

- assess the baseline condition of the watershed's receiving water bodies and compare it to existing and historic conditions,
- link trends in pollutant loading to pollution control measures, and
- link pollution impacts to pollution sources.

There are three priority pollutants listed for the Dominguez Watershed area by the Regional Water Quality Control Board (Order No. 01-182) namely trash, indicator bacteria and PAHs (Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons).

### **Outreach Efforts**

*Goal: link pollution impacts to pollution sources*

*Mechanism: outreach to businesses, industries and residents on the stormwater pollution prevention, recycling, solid waste management, and water conservation*

In-stream sampling done for the purpose of identifying sources of pollution in the watershed would require extensive and costly monitoring to trace each elevated level to its source of pollution. Instead this sampling plan proposes to proactively put information into the hands of those who are unfamiliar with the impacts of their day to day activities in order to effect change in behavior and ultimately eliminate pollution sources. Informational materials that may be used for this purpose have already been produced as part of permit requirements (for instance the MS4 stormwater permit) for Los Angeles County. These materials are available online for anyone to use. The key to success in this endeavor is proactive outreach with a consistent and multifaceted message.

Currently outreach to the general public is done for the most part on a reactive basis. Materials are delivered by inspectors prior to or during construction or in response to a complaint placed by an observer. This plan proposes to strategically target businesses, commercial districts, industries, community groups, and school districts with a consistent message addressing stormwater pollution prevention, recycling, solid waste management and water conservation. This outreach program will communicate what the impacts of pollution are, and that people and the things they do are the sources.

The targeted pollutants of this campaign are the priority listed pollutants for the Dominguez Watershed. In regard to PAHs the consistent message communicated should be keeping cars in good repair and

properly recycling used oil and other petroleum based products. To target a reduction in bacteria levels in the channel, the information should detail steps to take in order to prevent sewer line clogs or breaks. Bacteria may be introduced to the storm drain network, by improperly disposed of material, but it grows in cool, moist environments

### **Observation Stations**

*Goal: link trends in pollutant loading to pollution control measures*

*Mechanism: Regular visitors to the receiving water bodies in the watershed record visual and olfactory observations that agency personnel regularly respond to.*

The first step in linking trends in pollutant loading to control measures is to identify the trends in pollutant loading over time. To accomplish this, a regular and ongoing survey of the receiving water bodies in the watershed should be initiated.



This sampling program will establish observation stations along the waterbodies and in the natural areas of the watershed. These stations will include informational kiosks and observation books similar to a log book located at the start of a hiking trail. The informational signage will detail the type of information desired and those who utilize the trail can record observations in books that will assist local agency representatives in identifying pollution sources. As sources are identified and control measures put in place, these observation books can continue to be used to document the improvements to the area and assure that visual and olfactory aspects of the water are acceptable to people. This provides an opportunity for public

involvement and participation in stewardship of the watershed and will allow for focused response by agency representatives. It also will provide the most accurate information aside from real-time sampling. Information provided in the observation books would be collected and reviewed by the same people who take on the proactive public outreach described above.

### **Overall assessment**

*Goal: Assess the baseline condition of the watershed's receiving water bodies and compare it to existing and historic conditions*

*Mechanism: Coordinated compliance monitoring that reduces and eliminates redundancies*

Given the relatively small size of the Dominguez Watershed in comparison to surrounding watersheds, its surface water quality is monitored somewhat frequently by numerous industries located throughout the watershed under their respective discharge permit requirements and by the County of Los Angeles as part of their stormwater discharge permit (summaries of these programs available online at <http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/~rwqcb4/html/permits/permits.html>). These programs include analysis for a full range of chemical constituents, hydrocarbons and bacteria, acute and chronic toxicity, and bioassessment. However, due to the increasing costs of analysis and the decreasing pollutant limits, many dischargers have opted to send their process and storm water to the sanitary sewer and thus are not required to sample the receiving water. Regular grab or composite sampling of the ambient receiving water quality during the wet and dry season should continue to be performed strictly for assessment purposes and should always include analysis for at least PAHs, indicator bacteria and trash.

Rather than proposing additional sampling of the Dominguez Channel and the Harbor Complex, what is needed is a centralized, electronic, and web-based database where the actual data can be extrapolated. In this way, each discharger could submit an electronic file of the receiving water data to a central hub. Although, not a substantial burden for dischargers, an additional requirement to submit information to this database could be viewed as such by the Regional Board and qualify a discharger to some type of credit. In addition, a database that centralizes information will provide dischargers with a basis to request modifications to their monitoring requirements when redundancies are identified. Current sampling that is performed and could be included on this database

#### LA/LB Harbor

- Port of Long Beach and Port of Los Angeles
- City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power
- City of Los Angeles Bureau of Sanitation (Terminal Island)

#### Dominguez Channel

- County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works
- BP – Carson Refinery

#### Wilmington Drain/Machado Lake

- California State Department of Health Services
- City of Los Angeles Bureau of Sanitation
- City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks

The key to success of this program is a single point of contact that is well familiar with the watershed, DWAC and the database. By proactively staying informed of the various efforts in the watershed, and with support from the regulating community, trends and improvements in the overall assessment the Dominguez Watershed will be readily available utilizing existing monitoring programs. According to the County of Los Angeles' mission for watershed management to become a central source of information, the Department of Public Works would be a primary candidate for coordinating this effort.

## **Land**

The goal identified by the DWAC for monitoring the land surface of the Dominguez Watershed is to identify available open areas and their value.

Landuse and socioeconomic information is already well monitored and documented for the Dominguez Watershed and available in digital GIS form. This information should be made available so that outreach programs can be designed and implemented to target specific areas.

Because of the intense level of development in the Dominguez Watershed, the aspect of land that should be regularly monitored in order to improve the environment is the location and status of vacant, undisturbed and natural land. Using tools currently available, this assessment could be done on a yearly basis fairly easily. As evidenced by a similar program in the City of Rolling Hills Estates, simply keeping record of the undisturbed areas in the watershed will lead to an increased appreciation for these natural buffer areas by jurisdictions and the general public.

Using available aerial images of the watershed and ownership data from the County of Los Angeles Assessors office, vacant or undisturbed parcels should be identified and classified based on ownership and property value. An initial site assessment should be conducted to determine the visual quality of the property. Consideration could then be given to acquiring the parcels that are privately owned with grant funds to be converted to or protected as natural open areas for habitat or stormwater treatment. Those parcels which are publicly owned and satisfactory for protection as open space should be noted as such.

These land parcels could be listed on a central database so that when funds become available for land acquisition in the Dominguez Watershed, those with interest and the means to do so will be able to easily identify potential areas.

## **Habitat**

The goal identified by the DWAC for monitoring the habitat of the Dominguez Watershed is to assure that the bird and fish populations that have the potential to flourish are protected.

Due of the industrial and heavy development of the Dominguez Watershed, there is limited potential for habitat areas. However the natural or habitat potential areas in the watershed are regularly observed by various groups that are listed below.

### Madrona Marsh

Friends of Madrona Marsh  
City of Torrance

### Walteria Lake

Not currently monitored  
LACDPW?

### Harbor Regional Park / Machado Lake

The National Audubon Society  
City of Los Angeles

### Rolling Hills Canyons

Palos Verdes Land Conservancy

### Wilmington Drain / Dominguez Channel

Observation Stations  
LACDPW

### Linden H. Chandler Preserve

Palos Verdes Land Conservancy

### Gardena Willows

City of Gardena

### San Pedro Bay

Ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles

The information collected by these various groups could also be posted to the web based database to provide biological information to those interested in these areas.